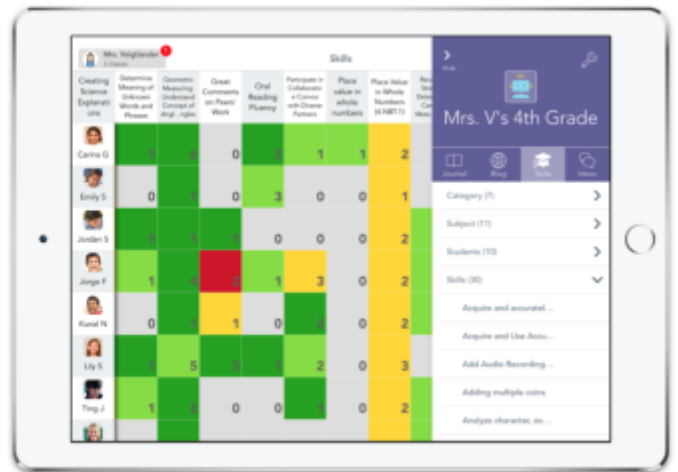
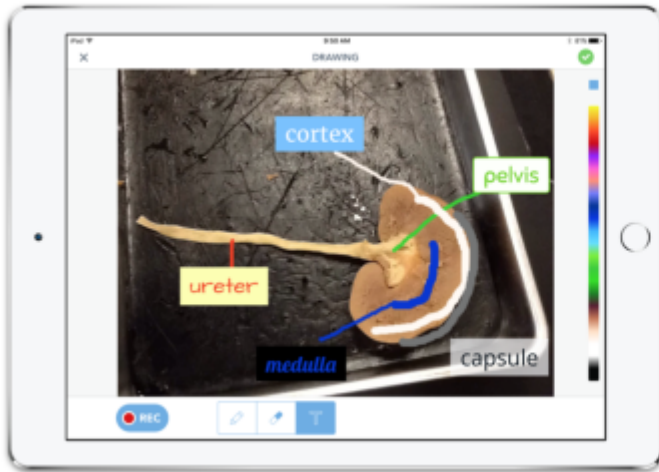




Kids don't try their hardest unless they think someone's watching. Overcrowded classrooms and distracted parents can make pouring effort into school work feel pointless. But [Seesaw's](#) app turns their assignments into social media they share with teachers, peers and mom and dad. Now it's invading schools across the country and just raised a Series A round from LinkedIn CEO Jeff Weiner and others.

On Seesaw, instead of racking up likes or receiving comments on a selfie, students get positive reinforcement on their quizzes, drawings and science projects. And for instructors, Seesaw serves as extra eyes, allowing them to focus on managing the classroom, then later watch self-recorded videos of students completing a task or working through a question.

By getting kids to care about classwork and giving teachers a closer look at their students' process not just output, Seesaw has quietly become one of the most popular learning tools for elementary school students. Now half of all U.S. schools have teachers using Seesaw, up from one-quarter in June 2016 when [we profiled the education startup](#). Millions of students now use Seesaw each month in 150 countries. And the startup has 1,000 schools and districts paying for the premium version of Seesaw.



Social media for students

[Seesaw offers](#) iOS, Android, Kindle, Chromebook and web apps where kids can share photos, videos, drawings, notes, links, files and blogs, and record voice-overs explaining their work. First they go to the teacher, who must approve the content as safe before it's exposed to other students. Teachers can grade work, send feedback to students and organize it by class, student or topic. Special education students have particularly benefited from the multimedia options that let them work with their different strengths in speaking or drawing as opposed to writing or video.



There are a few concerns with giving kids more “social media” in the classroom. I asked what happens if kids leave a mean comment on someone else’s work. But Sjogreen says comments have to go through teacher moderation too, and can produce learning opportunities for kids to understand how to act on the internet.

There’s also the concern that kids spending more time with devices in the classroom could distract them. Most students use Seesaw on school-provided tablets with limited apps and connectivity, though, so there’s no confusing work and play.

Selling to schools is notoriously tough for startups. Luckily, Seesaw’s Dropbox-style bottom-up distribution strategy gives the product away to teachers until a school feels like they might as well bake Seesaw into their systems. Still, the app has to [compete with alternatives](#) like [FreshGrade](#), which is focused on older students and a wide set of grading options.